

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 04432 052039Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 CEA-01 ITC-01

/092 W

----- 117124

P 051751Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1580

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 4432

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: NEW TRENDS IN CANADIAN FEDERALISM

REF: TORONTO'S 1842

1. SUMMARY: JOHN TURNER, FORMER MINISTER AND RIVAL TO TRUDEAU FOR LEADERSHIP OF THE LIBERAL PARTY, RECENTLY ASSERTED THAT THE UNITY OF CANADA MAY BEST BE PRESERVED BY GRANTING THE PROVINCES ADDITIONAL POWERS. A SHIFT IN AUTHORITY AWAY FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, HE SUGGESTED, COULD PLACATE NOT ONLY QUEBEC CONCERNS FOR THE PROTECTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE BUT ALSO THE QUALLY IMPORTANT CONCERNS OF OTHER PROVINCES ON OTHER MATTERS. TURNER'S THESIS IS SIMILAR TO THE MESSAGE WHICH PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE (PC) LEADER JOE CLARK HAS BEEN EMPHASIZING IN SPEECHES ACROSS CANADA OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. THIS CONCEPT OF FEDERALISM APPEARS TO BE GAINING POPULAR APPEAL, AND IT MAY BECOME ONE OF THE MAJOR ISSUES ON WHICH THE NEXT ELECTIONS ARE FOUGHT. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 04432 052039Z

2. JOHN TURNER'S OCTOBER 25 SPEECH IN TORONTO (REFTEL) NEATLY TIED TOGETHER TWO DIFFERENT TOPICS, BILINGUALISM AND FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL RELATIONS, INTO A POLITICALLY ATTRACTIVE PACKAGE. TURNER ASSERTED THAT BILINGUALISM HAS BEEN PUSHED INCORRECTLY AS THE "SOLE PREREQUISITE TO NATIONAL UNITY". IT IS, HE CLAIMED, ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL ELEMENTS CRUCIAL TO THE FUTURE OF A UNITED CANADA. HE CITED AS EQUALLY IMPORTANT WESTERN CONCERNS OVER "ISSUES OF RESOURCE OWNERSHIP, TRANSPORTATION AND THE TARIFF STRUCTURE" AS WELL AS "FOR ATLANTIC CANADA, EUQUALITY OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY".

3. TURNER'S PRESCRIPTION FOR PRESERVING CANADIAN UNITY LIES IN GREATER DECENTRALIZATION WITH A POWER SHIFT FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THE PROVINCES. "WE MAY HAVE TO DO SOME RE-THINKING ABOUT HOW WE HAVE BEEN USING OUR FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL STRUCTURE...THE TIME MAY BE HERE FOR CONTEMPLATING AMENDMENTS TO THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT TO REFLECT A NEW REALITY" OR APPLYING THE ACT AS IT STANDS BUT WITH "A BETTER SENSE OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL BALANCE AND THE SHIFTING NEEDS FOR OUR TIME".

4. TURNER'S VIEWS ARE ESSENTIALLY NO DIFFERENT FROM THE POSITION WHICH JOE CLARK HAS ADOPTED SINCE HIS ELECTION AS PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER LAST FEBRUARY. ONE OF THE FEW THEMES WHICH HAS EMERGED FROM HIS NON-STOP SPEAKING AROUND THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN DECENTRALIZATION. IN A SPEECH IN NEWFOUNDLAND IN EARLY OCTOBER, HE HAMMERED AWAY AT THE POINT HE HAS BEEN REPEATING IN EVERY PROVINCE. "THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS A CENTRALIST GOVERNMENT. THEY BELIEVE IN THE CONCENTRATION OF POWER IN THE CENTER ...THEY FORCE PROVINCES TO ACCEPT UNIVERSAL PROGRAMS, AND THEN THEY SEEK TO LEAVE THE PROVINCES WITH FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR IDEAS AND ACTIONS. THEY DO NOT CONSULT. THEY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 04432 052039Z

DICTATE."

5. COMMENT: THOUGH TURNER'S SPEECH WAS ONLY BRIEFLY REPORTED BY THE MEDIA, HIS THESIS IS WORTHY OF SPECIAL NOTE BECAUSE WE WILL LIKELY BE HEARING MUCH MORE OF IT BETWEEN NOW AND THE NEXT ELECTIONS, WHICH ARE SCHEDULED FOR NOT LATER THAN 1978. INCREASINGLY, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (READ

LIBERALS AND TRUDEAU) IS VIEWED WITH HOSTILITY BY THE CANADIAN PUBLIC WHICH SEES, OR THINKS IT SEES, A BLOATED AND INSENSITIVE OTTAWA BUREAUCRACY JAMMING DOWN THE COUNTRY'S THROAT SUCH CONTROVERSIAL MEASURES AS THE ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM, AN ILL-CONCEIVED BILINGUALISM PROGRAM, AND ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. REGIONAL GRIEVANCES ARE DIVERSE AND GROWING. QUEBEC THINKS THAT OTTAWA IS NOT DOING ENOUGH TO PROTECT FRENCH LANGUAGE RIGHTS, WHILE MUCH OF THE REST OF CANADA HOLDS THAT OTTAWA IS OVERLY ACCOMMODATING TO THE FRANCO-PHONES. THE WEST BELIEVES IT IS BEING VICTIMIZED BY OTTAWA THROUGH FREIGHT RATE AND TARIFF DISCRIMINATION AND THAT ITS NATURAL RESOURCES ARE BEING SIPHONED EAST AT CUT-RATE PRICES. ATLANTIC CANADA BELIEVES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS DEAF TO ITS ECONOMIC PLIGHT, IS WILLING TO KEEP IT AT A SUBSISTENCE LEVEL VIA THE DOLE, AND IS UNWILLING TO EXPEND MONEY AND EFFORT TO CREATE AN ATLANTIC INDUSTRIAL BASE. NONE OF THESE GRIEVANCES IS NEW. WHAT IS NEW IS THE LEVEL OF UNPOPULARITY OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE GROWING FEELING IN ALL REGIONS THAT AREA PROBLEMS MAY BEST BE SOLVED BY THE REGIONS THEMSELVES.

6. AS ASTUTE POLITICIANS, BOTH TURNER AND CLARK ARE AWARE OF THIS FEELING AND SEE DECENTRALIZATION AS A CAUSE WITH POPULAR APPEAL. THEY PROBABLY ALSO GENUINELY BELIEVE THAT THE UNITY OF CANADA CAN BEST BE ENSURED NOT JUST BY RESPONDING TO QUEBEC CONCERNS FOR FRENCH LANGUAGE RIGHTS BUT ALSO BY TRYING TO MEET THE CONCERNS OF OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTRY. AS TURNER PUT IT, "WITH COUNTRIES, AS WITH FAMILIES, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 OTTAWA 04432 052039Z

A LITTLE MORE DISTANCE CAN OFTEN IMPROVE THE FEELING OF TOGETHERNESS".

7. ON THE OTHER HAND, TRUDEAU, BOTH BY HIS POSITION AS PRIME MINISTER AND BY PERSONAL INCLINATION, IS DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO THE CLARK/TURNER THEME. AS HEAD OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, HE IS NATURALLY INCLINED TO BE THE CHAMPION OF FEDERAL POWERS. MOREOVER, HE GIVES NO SIGN THAT HE WILL BACK AWAY FROM CONTROVERSIAL OR UNPOPULAR PROGRAMS WHICH EPITOMIZE TO MANY A STRONG, CENTRALIZED FEDERAL POWER. HE STUBBORNLY MAINTAINS THAT THE BILINGUALISM PROGRAM IS BASICALLY SOUND AND THAT IT WILL SUCCEED WITH A LITTLE TINKERING AND A LOT OF SALESMANSHIP. HIS GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO,

INDEED SYNONYMOUS WITH, THE ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM, AND IT WILL RIDE WITH IT WHATEVER ITS UNPOPULARITY. EVEN THE TRUDEAU PERSONALITY PROVIDES AMMUNITION FOR THE ANTI-OTTAWA ATTACK. TRUDEAU'S APPARENT ARROGANCE WHICH SUGGESTS THAT HE AND OTTAWA KNOW BEST CONFORMS NICELY TO THE CLARK CHARGE THAT "THEY DO NOT CONSULT. THEY DICTATE."

8. IN SHORT, OPPOSITION FORCES (AND TURNER MUST BE INCLUDED IN THIS DESCRIPTION) HAVE COME UPON A HIGHLY POPULAR AND POLITICALLY EFFECTIVE PROPOSAL, ALL THE MORE SO IN VIEW OF THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT'S INABILITY OR UNWILLINGNESS TO BE FLEXIBLE. THIS COULD BECOME ONE OF THE MAJOR ISSUES ON WHICH THE 1978 ELECTIONS WILL BE FOUGHT.

9. WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S.? TO THE EXTENT THAT GOVERNMENT POWER MOVES FROM OTTAWA TO THE 10 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS, OUR RELATIONS WITH CANADA WILL TEND TO BECOME MORE COMPLEX AND POTENTIALLY MORE DIFFICULT. THIS FEDERALIST CONTROVERSY, HOWEVER, IN NO WAY SUGGESTS A BREAK-UP OF THE CONFEDERATION WHICH WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE SERIOUS RAMIFICATIONS FOR THE U.S. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING HERE THAT NO MAJOR, NATIONAL PARTY CAN SAFELY ADVANCE A PROPOSAL WHICH THREATENS THE STRUCTURE OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 OTTAWA 04432 052039Z

THE COUNTRY, AND NEITHER TURNER NOR CLARK IS EVEN REMOTELY SUGGESTING THIS NOTION. RATHER, THEY HOLD TO THE SEEMINGLY PARADOXICAL BELIEF THAT THE BEST WAY TO PRESERVE THE UNITY OF CANADA IS THROUGH A HIGHER DEGREE OF AUTONOMY FOR THE PROVINCES, AND THEY MAY BE RIGHT.
ENDERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, SPEECHES, FEDERALISM, OFFICIAL LANGUAGE, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OTTAWA04432
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760413-1030
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761177/aaaacoiz.tel
Line Count: 208
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TORONTO 1842
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 APR 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW TRENDS IN CANADIAN FEDERALISM
TAGS: PINT, CA, (TURNER, JOHN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006